1. (Three Times Amended) A data processing apparatus having connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses, comprising:

first obtaining means for obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

second obtaining means for obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses;

selection means for selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first data and the second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses; and

job assigning means for assigning the image output job to the image output apparatus selected by said selection means,

wherein, in a case where the first data designated by the operator designates to select an image output apparatus which completes execution of the image output job in a shortest time, said selection means selects an image output apparatus from among the plurality of image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation in the shortest time based on second data for each of the respective image output apparatuses which indicates a time required by each of the image output apparatuses to output one page of an output job, and a number of pages for output jobs in each of the image output apparatuses which have not yet been output.

4. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said selection means comprises confirmation means for confirming a function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by

said connection means, and selects the image output apparatus having the function to perform an output operation corresponding to the first and second data.

5. (Twice Amended) The data processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said confirmation means confirms the function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses by referring to a memory which stores, in advance, data indicative of the function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by said connection means.

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6. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said confirmation means confirms the function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses by communicating with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by said connection means.

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8. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising display means for displaying a message regarding an execution state of the image output job assigned to each of the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by said connection means.

9. (Three Times Amended) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein in a case where the first data further designates to select an image output apparatus capable of a color image output, said selection means confirms a function of each

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of the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by said connection means and selects an image output apparatus which can perform the color image output.

10. (Three Times Amended) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein in a case where the first data further designates to select an image output apparatus capable of printing on both sides of a recording medium, said selection means confirms a function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by said connection means and selects an image output apparatus which can perform the printing on both sides of the recording medium.

11. (Three Times Amended) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein in a case where the first data further designates a size of an output image, said selection means confirms a function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses connected by said connection means and selects an image output apparatus which can perform an output operation in the designated size.

12. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein in a case where there are plural image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation corresponding to the first and second data, said selection means selects one of the plural image output apparatuses based on priorities set in advance.

13. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein in a case where there are plural image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation corresponding to the first and second data, said selection means allows an operator to select one of the plural image output apparatuses.

14. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein in a case where the first data designates plural output forms, said selection means selects an image output apparatus which can perform an output operation in all of the plural output forms.

15. (Not Changed From Prior Version) An image output system comprising the data processing apparatus according to claim 1 and a plurality of image output apparatuses connected to the data processing apparatus by said connection means.

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16. (Three Times Amended) A data processing method for executing an image output job by selecting one of a plurality of image output apparatuses, comprising the steps of:

obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses;

selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first and second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses; and

assigning the image output job to the image output apparatus selected in said selecting step,

wherein, in a case where the first data designated by the operator designates to select an image output apparatus which completes execution of the image output job in a shortest time, said selecting step selects an image output apparatus from among the plurality of image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation in a shortest time based on second data for each of the respective image output apparatuses which indicates a time required by each of the image output apparatuses to output one page of an output job, and a number of pages for output jobs in each of the image output apparatuses which have not yet been output.

19. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, wherein said selecting step comprises a step of confirming a function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses, and selects an image output apparatus having a function to perform an output operation corresponding to the first and second data.

20. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 19, wherein in said confirming step, the function of each of the plurality

of image output apparatuses is confirmed by referring to a memory which stores in advance data indicative of the function of each of the image output apparatuses.

21. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 19, wherein in said confirming step, the function of each of the plurality of image output apparatuses is confirmed by communicating with each of the image output apparatuses.

23. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, further comprising a step of displaying a message regarding an execution state of the image output job assigned to each of the image output apparatuses.

24. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, wherein in a case where the first data designates to select an image output apparatus capable of a color image output, in said selecting step, a function of each of the image output apparatuses is confirmed, and an image output apparatus which can perform the color image output is selected.

25. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, wherein in a case where the first data designates to select an image output apparatus capable of printing on both sides of a recording medium, in said selecting step, a function of each of the image output apparatuses is confirmed and an image output

apparatus which can perform the printing on both sides of the recording medium is selected.

26. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, wherein in a case where the first data designates a size of an output image, in said selecting step, function of each of the image output apparatuses is confirmed and an image output apparatus which can perform an output operation in the designated size is selected.

27. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, wherein in a case where there are plural image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation corresponding to the first and second data, one of the plural image output apparatuses is selected in said selecting step based on priorities set in advance.

28. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, wherein in a case where there are plural image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation corresponding to the first and second data, one of the plural image output apparatuses is selected in said selecting step based on an instruction input by an operator.

29. (Not Changed From Prior Version) The data processing method according to claim 16, wherein in a case where the first data designates plural output forms, an image output apparatus which can perform an output operation in all of the plural output forms is selected in said selecting step.

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30. (Three Times Amended) A data processing apparatus having connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses, comprising:

first obtaining means for obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

second obtaining means for obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses; and

selection means for selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first data and the second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses,

wherein, in a case where the first data designated by the operator designates to select an image output apparatus which completes execution of the image output job in a shortest time, said selection means selects an image output apparatus from among the plurality of image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation in a shortest time based on second data for each of the respective image output apparatuses which indicates a time required by each of the image output apparatuses to output one page of an output job, and a number of pages for output jobs in each of the image output apparatuses which have not yet been output.

31. (Three Times Amended) A data processing method for executing an image output job by selecting one of a plurality of image output apparatuses, comprising the steps of:

obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses; and

selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first and second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses,

wherein, in a case where the first data designated by the operator designates to select an image output apparatus which completes execution of the image output job in a shortest time, said selecting step selects an image output apparatus from among the plurality of image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation in a shortest time based on second data for each of the respective image output apparatuses which indicates a time required by each of the image output apparatuses to output one page of an output job, and a number of pages for output jobs in each of the image output apparatuses which have not yet been output.

32. (Three Times Amended) A memory medium storing program code for controlling a data processing apparatus which includes connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses, the program code comprising the steps of:

obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses

selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first and second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses; and

assigning the image output job to the image output apparatus selected in said selecting step,

33. (Three Times Amended) A program for controlling a data processing apparatus having connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses, the program comprising the steps of:

obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses;

selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first and second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses ; and

assigning the image output job to the image output apparatus selected in said selecting step,

wherein, in a case where the first data designated by the operator designates to select an image output apparatus which completes execution of the image output job in a

shortest time, said selecting step selects an image output apparatus from among the plurality of image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation in a shortest time based on second data for each of the respective image output apparatuses which indicates a time required by each of the image output apparatuses to output one page of an output job, and a number of pages for output jobs in each of the image output apparatuses which have not yet been output.

34. (Twice Amended) A memory medium storing program code for controlling a data processing apparatus which includes connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses, the program comprising the steps of:

obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses; and

selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first and second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses,

wherein, in a case where the first data designated by the operator designates to select an image output apparatus which completes execution of the image output job in a shortest time, said selecting step selects an image output apparatus from among the plurality of image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation in a shortest time based on second data for each of the respective image output apparatuses which indicates a time required by each of the image output apparatuses to output one page of an

output job, and a number of pages for output jobs in each of the image output apparatuses which have not yet been output.

35. (Three Times Amended) A program for controlling a data processing apparatus having connection means for being connected to a plurality of image output apparatuses, the program comprising the steps of:

obtaining first data associated with an image output job, the first data being designated by an operator;

obtaining second data associated with each of the plurality of image output apparatuses; and

selecting an image output apparatus, based on the first and second data, from the plurality of image output apparatuses,

wherein, in a case where the first data designated by the operator designates to select an image output apparatus which completes execution of the image output job in a shortest time, said selecting step selects an image output apparatus from among the plurality of image output apparatuses which can perform an output operation in a shortest time based on second data for each of the respective image output apparatuses which indicates a time required by each of the image output apparatuses to output one page of an output job, and a number of pages for output jobs in each of the image output apparatuses which have not yet been output.